

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 09875 319 5

Accessions

325,329

Shelf No.

2401.68




Received Mar. 22, 1883

[illegible]

*This book was issued to the borrower on the date
last stamped below.*

[illegible]



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Boston Public Library

THE
NEW ENGLANDERS;

A Comedy of the Revolution.

IN THREE ACTS.

BY E. M. DAVISON.

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

COLLINS & BROTHER,
414 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

1882.



THE
NEW ENGLANDERS ;

A Comedy of the Revolution.

IN THREE ACTS.

BY E. M. DAVISON.

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

COLLINS & BROTHER,
414 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

1882.



B. H.
325.329

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mar. 22, 1883.

- FARMER WHITLEY, - - - A Farmer of Lexington.
- PARSON BROWN, - - - - - A Clergyman.
- ABEL, } - - - - - Sons of Farmer Whitley.
JOHN, }
- SWITCH, - - - - - A Schoolmaster.
- LIEUT. MELVILLE, - - An Officer of the British Army.
- COL. SMITH, - - - - - “ “ “ “
- MAJOR PITCAIRN, - - - - - “ “ “ “
- Sergeant—Soldiers—Minute-men.
- MRS. WHITLEY, - - - - - Wife of Whitley.
- PRISCILLA HOPE, } - - - - - Boston girls.
CONTENT HOPE, }
- MARY WHITLEY.

THE NEW-ENGLANDERS.

ACT 1st.—SCENE 1st.

SCENE—*A wooded knoll, trees and rocks, sloping up at back slightly—At left back, a distant view of open country below—Enter Farmer WHITLEY and Parson BROWN, talking earnestly, left.*

FARMER W. The times are indeed anxious for all true lovers of their country. I will not say too, but what I look with some feeling of regret and sorrow to that mother country from which we are so surely drifting.

PARSON B. It is, indeed, a matter of sorrow; but we must not forget how cruelly he, who rules that mother country, has forgotten her children, in all but oppression.

FARMER W. Ah! King George has much to answer for. See, we are even now, in truth, in arms against his troops. Yonder minute-man (*pointing off left*), with musket and horn, is but one sign of the approaching trouble.

PARSON B. But who is this? (*looking off right*).

FARMER W. It is that creature, Switch. I have my doubts of that man, Brown. There is a sneaking way about him I do not like.

PARSON B. A harmless schoolmaster, I think, Farmer Whitley.

[Enter SWITCH, right; long strip of paper pinned to back.]

SWITCH. Good morning! A fine morning, gentlemen! You see a master—a schoolmaster, but without a school. My charges broke from me this morning and fled to the Green, to hear the morning courier give his news. I cannot hold them to their tasks in such rebellious times.

FARMER W. (*taking strip from SWITCH's back*)—They have left something here. What is it?

SWITCH. Ah! the young scoundrels! They shall smart for this.

FARMER W. Read it! read it! Parson Brown. My old eyes fail me without my bows.

PARSON B. (*reading*.)

Master Tory Switch! Master Tory Ben!

Here's a last good-bye for good;

You'll have to cluck, mistress Tory hen!

For you've lost your "rebel brood."

Did you call your children a "rebel brood," Master Switch?

SWITCH. In a moment of anger, gentlemen.

FARMER W. A foolish thing, sir, and one which might bring you into suspicion with the Committee of Safety. It seems to me that to clear your skirts, good mistress tory hen, it would be wise of you to proceed to Lexington and join the minute-men.

SWITCH. Have mercy, gentlemen! Consider my calling, which is but a peaceful one. Consider my feebleness of body! I can better serve my country in some other way.

PARSON B. A man can do no better than joining with the rest to protect his country from the assaults of her enemies; (*laughing*) and the imparting of the results of your studies to your young charges through the medium of your wand of office, should, by this time, have strengthened your feebleness of body.

FARMER W. Sir, you are a disgrace to your mother, who was as patriotic a woman as I ever met. You deserve to have your name broken over your back for your cowardice.

SWITCH (*theatrically*). You wrong me, gentlemen; you wrong me cruelly. I will proceed immediately to Lexington, and join that band of patriots. You shall never again have occasion to accuse me of cowardice or lack of patriotism. See, I go perchance to meet my death.

[*Exit, right.*]

FARMER W. I believe he is crazy now.

PARSON B. We have been too hard upon the school-master. He will not shirk his duty, though somewhat slow to rush into danger, which comes, perhaps, from a naturally studious and peaceful disposition.

FARMER W. You may be right; but I have no patience with his like—of which, thank God, there are but few, or it might be the worst for us in the black days to come.

PARSON B. Do you look for any immediate crisis in the impending struggle, Farmer Whitley?

FARMER W. No, sir—no, not until the Summer. I do not think the regulars will move till then; or I should get Priscilla and Content back to their father in Boston; but, when it comes, I bid King George beware!

PARSON B. (*walking off.*) It has seemed to me that your house and barns were too near the road, for the proper protection of the stores confided to your charge. We will speak of the matter to the Committee of Safety.

[*Exeunt, left.*]

SCENE 2d—the same.

[Enter SWITCH, *right*.

SWITCH. There they go—the patriotic clod-hopper and the hypocritical parson. Join the minute-men, indeed! and make myself a butt for the ridicule of all the young dirt-grubbers of the neighborhood! *I*, who so far excel them in all that pertains to real worth of intellect! No, no, no. But what shall I do? Where can I go? I am convinced of danger here. I saw three horsemen early this morning, down by the cross-roads there (*pointing off*), and when I was modestly, as becomes a man of my profession, endeavoring to withdraw myself from their notice, they were down on me, with pistols drawn; and, in fear of my life, I told them much of matters concerning which they asked me—and truthfully, too, for I am always a man of truth. Then they rode away with a laugh, and one of them, a handsome fellow, was back in a moment, and said: “You damned coward! Here is a letter for Miss Priscilla Hope, at Mr. Whitley’s; give it her, and see you do it when no one is by. If you mention it to any one, or breathe a word of passing speech with us, we will hang you to the tallest tree in Lexington, when we come out to chase you Rebels.” With that, he put spurs to his horse, and rode after the others, leaving me in an agony of doubt. I have the letter here. I judged them to be British officers, by their manner of speech; and I am sure they were out to spy the country before the regulars march. What can he have to say to Miss Priscilla? He must have met her in Boston. I have it. He means to warn her to return to Boston, and the army will march shortly. What—what shall I do? What a heart-rending position for a scholar and student to be in. Shall I go to Boston? It will be safer there. But they may take me for a spy; and then to leave Mary, sweet Mary Whitley—no, I cannot go. I must trust to my customary dis-

cretion for safety. (*Sits himself on a rock, with head in hands.*)

[*Enter JOHN, with musket and powder horn, left.*]

JOHN. Hulloo! It is Switch, dreaming, as usual—(*clapping him on back.*) Well, Switch!

SWITCH. Bu—— how you frightened me, Master John!

JOHN. What news in the village? I have been on duty here since sunrise. Is there any news from Boston, man?

SWITCH. No news, Master John—no news. I am now on my way to the Green, to find out what the morning courier brought, and will pass this way on my return.

JOHN. No need—no need; but thank you all the same. Abel relieves me in a short space, and I'll be there before you at your rate of traveling. We have muster this afternoon.

SWITCH. Is your sister Mary quite well this morning, Master John?

JOHN. Mary! Oh, yes, quite well. I am a-looking for the girls now, with my dinner.

SWITCH. A very fortunate man, you are, Master John—very fortunate, with three charming girls to wait upon you.

JOHN. Oh, every one must take their share of duty. The girls feels quite important, and are glad to be of any use. Join the minute-men, and you will have the same attention.

SWITCH. But you are all alone out here, and sometimes, in the night-time too; it must be very still and fearsome.

JOHN. All alone—yes; but what of that? The trees can't hurt me. As for the regulars, they will make noise enough, I'll warrant; besides, I am here for them. I must to my look-out again. I cannot see the cross-roads here.

[*Exit JOHN, left.*]

SWITCH. Join the minute-men! The same tune (*looking off down the road*). Can't see the cross-roads. Can he see them up above? No matter. It was too dark this morning. Here come the girls. Sweet Mary! fair flower! How gracefully she moves along!

[*Enter MARY, PRISCILLA and CONTENT; MARY, with basket, right.*]

MARY. Now, Content, you should carry the basket; you know it is for John.

CONTENT. For John, indeed! And why because it is for John? You country girls are very simple creatures, Miss Mary. You pick a sweet-heart for a girl before she can think for herself. For Cousin John, indeed!

PRISCILLA. Here is the rock, girls! We'll lay the dinner here, and then call this brave young sentinel (*seeing SWITCH, who has been bowing and smirking*)—Good morning to you, Mr. Switch!

CONTENT. (*aside.*) That horrid Switch!

SWITCH. Good morning, ladies. The sweetness of the day is rivaled by your looks.

CONTENT. Oh, what a compliment! How fine!

MARY. Since when are you a poet, Master Switch?

SWITCH. Since my imagination was fired by your eyes, Miss Mary.

MARY. Indeed! I'll weep to put it out.

SWITCH. I pray you, let it burn.

CONTENT. And what of my eyes, Master Switch? No matter. Poets are poor creatures, some one says. I'd rather wed a soldier than a poet, and much prefer the smell of powder to the taste of ink.

MARY. And so do I.

(*They busy themselves about dinner.*)

SWITCH. (*aside.*) I'll join the minute-men.

PRIS. A man can be a soldier and a poet, too.

CONTENT. Like one we know. But then he would be perfect, and perfection in a man is worse than naught. If he be perfect, we have no cause for quarrel, and so no making up; but if he be naught, we can scold him for it, and then sweetly forgive, and so love on anew.

MARY. Content, you are too light, my love.

CONTENT. Then I am like your cakes, and made to rise.

MARY. But not well bred.

CONTENT. What, Mary—a pun? A poor pun from you! Country girls, Miss Mary, should not make puns. Leave that for wicked city misses.

MARY. You'll ne'er be done. Your tongue is straight from Boston, child.

CONTENT. And yours is tied by country modesty. Write us a sonnet for a country Miss, Mr. Poet; and see you put in it a pair of down-cast eyes, and feet well hidden by the holland gown. Paint her with modest hood, and homespun apron, too, and sweet, and useful. Make her but glance toward a man, and look away. Bring in a dove, or some such timid bird.

SWITCH. Ladies, I will; I'll do my best. Give me but time. The theme is apt. (*Aside.*) Sweet girls, I'll stay in Lexington.

PRIS. The dinner's ready, girls.

MARY. I'll go.

CONTENT. No, I— (*both run off, left.*)

(*PRISCILLA looks off at back.*)

SWITCH. Now, for the letter. Shall I give it her? No—I'll leave it on the ground. She'll see it, when she turns—(*puts letter on ground.*) Ahem! Good-day, Miss Hope. I'm to the Green, to learn the news. (*Going off, right.*)

[*Exit.*]

PRIS. What—going, Master Switch? Good-day. (*Sees letter.*) Stop—stop! You have dropped—(*picks*

up letter). Why, 'tis for me. Who can it be? It's Harry's hand. (*Opens letter, reading:*)

"My darling! Meet me at the knoll below your uncle's house, at two. Be sure and come.

"In haste, your HARRY."

Why, he'll be shot. What does he mean? How could he come out here? How imprudent of him! Could he not wait until I'm back in Boston, but must come out at peril of his life? And yet I am so glad! (*Reading:*) At the knoll—that is here. Perhaps he is hiding now. Oh, no; *he* would not hide. At two, he says, to come—at two. It's almost that—and Abel's turn on guard!—he is so strict! What shall I do? Here they come! (*Conceals letter.*)

[*Enter MARY, CONTENT and JOHN.*

CONTENT. A horrid, dangerous gun; and you so proud of it! Turn it from me, sir. Will it go off?

JOHN. Not to hurt you, cousin. The piece is sensible in that, and keeps its fire till its bid.

CONTENT. Don't bid it shoot me, then, or I'll not be content.

MARY. Why, Priscilla, you look so pale! Are you tired, dear?

PRIS. A little tired, Mary. The walk is long for city girls. Your turn of guard will soon be over, John?

JOHN. Yes; Abel will be here directly.

CONTENT. Yes, and then we'll all to the Green to see the muster; and Master John shall show himself with his left, right—left, right—a pretty soldier. What's the step? The goose, I think. Oh, no; it must be gander.

MARY. You are the goose. John, we've laid your dinner here.

[*They sit around.*

CONTENT. Here is a bit of fitch, some of Mary's cakes; and here—see, that is tea—cold tea. Now.

JOHN. A dinner for the King. (*Begins to eat.*)

CONTENT. Oh, anything is good enough for him. Don't gobble, gander.

PRISCILLA. Tut—tut, Content; your wit's too sharp.

JOHN (*eating*). Yes; sharp as nettles.

CONTENT. But donkeys are not stung.

JOHN. No, they live upon them; and so would I upon your wit, cousin.

MARY. Now, that was well said, and a very pretty compliment, Miss Saucy.

CONTENT. Thank you, Johnny. Now, I'm still; so you must live upon your victuals.

JOHN. Did you see Switch, girls, as you came along?

CONTENT. The poet? Yes. He stopped in yonder hedge, to write a sonnet to our Mary's eyes.

MARY. Content!

CONTENT. Well, so he said.

PRIS. He has gone to Lexington.

JOHN. And left the school for the day, I guess.

CONTENT. The school left him. We passed the children on the road; they all cried out some rhyme, and called him "Tory Ben"—a Tory! he! Our Briton Tories are proper sort of men, are they not, sister Priscilla? Lieut. Harry Melville—there's a Tory.

PRIS. (*getting up and moving off*). Content, you are very unkind.

CONTENT (*following her*). Oh, Priscilla, I am so sorry. Forgive me, dear.

JOHN (*rising*). What is the matter, now? Surely, Priscilla does not—

MARY. It is only Content's nonsense, John.

[*Enter ABEL, right.*]

ABEL. You keep a watchful guard, brother John. An army might have passed, and you not know it, with all this clatter.

JOHN. I have kept one eye for the road.

ABEL. And one and both your ears for Miss Content, who, I will warrant, has kept them busy. Is it not so, Miss Chatterbox?

CONTENT. Chatterbox, indeed! I'll box your ears, for all you are so old and solemn.

ABEL. Then do it with your hand, and keep your tongue for John's. Priscilla, quiet cousin, have they been plaguing you with all their nonsense?

PRIS. Not more than usually. Are you for guard?

ABEL. Yes; I must take my turn till sunset, and John should go to muster now.

JOHN. Yes; I'm off. Are you going with me, girls?

CONTENT. Yes, yes—we are going. Come, pack the basket, Mary.

PRIS. I'll bring the basket. The Green will be too far for me to walk.

CONTENT. You stay with Abel, lest a bear should eat him up. Come, Master John—now, forward, march. Mary, fall in. Is it that you say, goose-stepper?

MARY. You know the way, Priscilla, dear.

PRIS. 'Tis not so far. I'll stay with Abel for a while, and watch the road.

CONTENT. Now, mind! no flirting.

PRIS. Content, how can you?

CONTENT. Good-bye, old people; keep a sharp look-out. Now, Master John.

[Exeunt JOHN, CONTENT and MARY, right.]

ABEL. A happy, thoughtless girl. She would laugh and bandy words, if all the English force were marching up the road. And you, Priscilla, are so different—so prudent, thoughtful, and will make a wife all that a wife should be for any man; and yet for me, as you have said, it cannot be.

PRIS. Abel, you know we said we would never speak of that again.

ABEL. But am I wanting as a man? Am I not tall and strong and honorable? Have I not reached an age to love as you should best be loved, Priscilla?

PRIS. You are, indeed, all that, Abel; I know it, cousin; but we women, capricious, if you will, cannot so place our love as seems, even to ourselves, the best. We love, or do not love, and are not even governed by our wills.

ABEL. 'T will be small matter when those English come. I must to the look-out, and you had best turn home.

[*Turns toward left, as he turns—enter MELVILLE, right; hastily retiring again, at a gesture from PRISCILLA.*]

PRIS. (*carelessly*). Is it far to your look-out, Abel?

ABEL. Not far—(*eagerly, coming back*). Will you come with me, cousin? 'T is right above here, and you may see the road for miles, stretching out toward Boston through Woburn.

PRIS. And can you see this knoll, and the bit of road below?

ABEL. Not here; but where the road comes out from by the hill, you can see it, up to Lexington.

PRIS. (*seeming to hesitate*). No; I'll not go with you to-day. Some other day I'll come and sit with you. I am tired with my walk, and must get a nap to rest me.

ABEL. You look pale, dear. Shall I walk home with you?

PRIS. And leave your guard! No, no—I am not so weak as that, Mr. Abel, if I am a city girl. I will not take you from your duty. Who knows, they may be almost here—those horrid regulars. John, too, was quite a time at his dinner, and you have dallied here with me.

ABEL. Yes, I must go.

[*Exit ABEL, left.*]

PRIS. He is gone.

[*Enter MELVILLE, right.*]

Oh, Harry! Be careful.

MELVILLE. Priscilla, dear ! Why, how you tremble !

PRIS. Why did you come out here ? Why did you come ? If he should see you, he would shoot you, Harry.

MEL. Did I not shoot him the first.

PRIS. But you have no arms. Why did you come ? How foolish of you !

MEL. I have a musket on my horse. Who is this stern provincial, Priscilla, whom I ought to be so much afraid of ?

PRIS. He is my cousin, sir—Mr. Abel Whitley.

MEL. Your cousin, eh ! I say, Priscilla, he does not presume upon his relationship, does he ? If I thought he did——

PRIS. (*laughing*). Oh, no ; he is very sedate.

MEL. That is well. (*Aside*)—What a fool he must be. (*Aloud*)—And what is he doing out here, Priscilla, with his musket and powder-horn, and such a martial air ?

PRIS. He is on guard—a minute-man.

MEL. On guard !—a minute-man ! A rebel, then—ha-ha ! He will not be so long. And you, little rebel, have you been thinking of me all the time that you have been away ?

PRIS. Of course, I have. I have your ring, you see. I have kissed it every night and morning.

MEL. Have you—really ? Why, then, you are a darling, little rebel. But, Priscilla, we have not time to talk this way now. I must tell you something, dear, of the greatest importance.

PRIS. How serious you are ! What is it ? Tell me quick, and laugh again.

MEL. Be prepared, and do not scream. But, first, promise me not to mention to any one a word of what I am about to tell you.

PRIS. I promise. What can it be ?

MEL. I have come for you.

PRIS. Come for me, Harry! What do you mean?

MEL. Yes—come for you; I have another horse in the woods, below the cross-roads, and you must meet me there as soon as possible.

PRIS. Meet you there?

MEL. Yes. I will ride down, and you walk slowly, on to the field above. As soon as you reach the woods, turn back to the cross-roads, and then away for Boston.

PRIS. But, Harry, why? I will not elope. I did not think that you would ask me to do such an un-maidenly thing. Is it not enough that I should meet you here alone, but you must wish to take me off against my will?

MEL. Against your will!

PRIS. Yes—it would be against my will to go with you, alone, to Boston. Besides, I will not go. You seem to think that we provincial girls must obey your commands, without even being persuaded. No, I'll not go. We shall be back—Content and I—in but a fortnight now, and then you may see me every evening, sir. Come, let us talk of something else, since you have little time to stay.

MEL. Priscilla, you do not understand. You must go, child. I do not ask you to elope, my love. I'll put you in your father's house in Boston before they sit down to tea. You must go back; it is not safe out here. (*Aside*)—I must not tell her; she might betray us by a word or look.

PRIS. Not safe out here! And why not, sir? I have my uncle, and Abel, and John, to protect me from—from what? There is nothing to protect me from.

MEL. I never thought you so obstinate. When I assure you that I will take you home to your father without harm—without so much as bruising one of those little fingers, and that this very evening—is it not best that you should go? Do you not trust me? Did

you not promise, Priscilla, to trust me in all things? And here, the very first time, you hesitate. Now, I am in earnest, child. Something is about to happen, perhaps this very night, which makes it most imperative that you should go to Boston now with me.

PRIS. Happen! What can happen?

MEL. I cannot tell you, darling; but there will be something

PRIS. (*wildly*.) Oh, I know; the army is coming out.

MEL. Hush! hush! dear—some one will hear you.

PRIS. And you are coming, too, and may be killed! They will fight, I know they will. Abel and John, and all—they are so brave. Why should they come? We are the same people, the same blood. Why—why must we fight and kill each other, Harry?

MEL. Don't, dear! We are ordered, and must obey. I do not think the rebels will stand, Priscilla. We will but march out to Concord Green, burn some of their stores, and back again.

PRIS. You do not know them, sir. They will stand; I am sure of it.

MEL. Then the better reason, dear, that you should go with me. Come, quick—decide, Priscilla. Will you come? Won't you come, darling? I ask it—I beg it of you.

PRIS. And leave them all!—it would be so cowardly! No, Harry, I must stay here; there will be no danger for a woman. I could never look my uncle and relatives in the face again, should I leave them now when trouble comes. And Content, too—how can I leave her? It is selfish to ask me.

MEL. But consider, Priscilla. In war-time, there is safety for no one. I know our soldiers; if the provincials offer any resistance, they will burn and ravage everything. You must come. Come—we must be off. We must ride fast to reach town in time. Come.

PRIS. No, Harry—no. Kiss me once, darling, and go, if you must; but I must stay. Good-bye.

[*He takes her in his arms.*]

MEL. Good-bye, darling. (*Holding her off and looking at her.*) Once more—won't you come with me, darling?

PRIS. No—no. Go—go quickly.

[*Enter ABEL, left, hastily, as MELVILLE bounds off, right.*]

ABEL. Priscilla! Not gone! What! A red-coat, by the eternal. (*Cocks his gun, and aims off, right.*)

PRIS. Abel, don't fire—don't.

ABEL (*lowering muzzle of gun.*) Who is it, Priscilla? Come, quick, girl, speak.

PRIS. (*hesitating.*) It's—it's a friend.

ABEL. (*sound of hoofs is heard.*) An officer! I know him by the horse. (*Raises gun and fires.*)

[*A shout of derision is heard.*]

PRIS. You have killed him. (*Staggers.*)

ABEL. Missed him, confound it! (*Turns.*) Priscilla, what is the matter?

[*Rushes to her; she waves him off, saying, "You have killed"—and falls fainting on the rock.*]

ABEL (*trying to raise her.*) Priscilla! Priscilla, darling! (*starting up.*) By Heaven, she must have known him. She loves him. (*Picking up musket, he stands looking at her a moment.*) And yet I did my duty.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—FARMER WHITLEY'S Kitchen—*A New-England Farm-house Kitchen—wide fire-place, dresser, slaw-bank, settee, etc.; door with sockets for wooden bars—two doors left—window with heavy wooden shutters cut with loop-holes. TIME—Evening of same day. FARMER WHITLEY and ABEL are discovered sitting before fire, ABEL cleaning musket.*

ABEL. I tell you, father, I cannot be mistaken; it was an officer of the regulars—Lieut. Melville. I saw him, when I went to Boston for the girls, at Uncle Hope's.

FARMER W. Your Uncle Hope inclines too much to these Tories, Abel. I hear he has them often at his house. Do you think he was out to spy, this young sprig, or was it but to see Priscilla that he came?

ABEL. At first, I thought of my watch and orders most, and so I fired; but when I turned and saw her fainting there, I thought of her alone—that he had come out to see her—that she loved him. It seemed to me before that she had been eager to be rid of me, so I put the two together.

FARMER W. Did you question her?

ABEL. I could not say a word; but when I had seen her safely home, I turned back, and resolved out there, alone, to say nothing of it to any one, until I had your advice.

FARMER W. The question, to my mind, lies here—either this officer was there to see Priscilla, or he had come for information of our readiness, and knowing her in Boston, as you say, but stopped to pass "good day," when you came on him. If he came to meet her, and she loves him, it is the way of women, and is of importance for Brother Hope to know, concerning us but little.

ABEL. To me it is important, father.

FARMER W. Well, yes, to you; though you are man enough, my boy, to give a woman all her way of heart, and are not one of those to mope and mourn because that heart is not for you.

ABEL. Yes, I am man enough, but still 'tis hard. A regular too.

FARMER W. But if he was *not* there for her, he came before the others of his hireling tribe, and they will follow soon. This, it is most peremptory that we should know, and know it we must, and immediately; that should there be anything in my suspicion, we can straightway communicate with the Committee of Public Safety in Concord town (*rising*); therefore, I think I will call the girl, and cross-examine her.

ABEL (*rising*). I'll to the barns; there are some "chores" to do. (*Rests gun in corner by fire-place.*)

FARMER W. No—you stay here.

ABEL. But, father——

FARMER W. Stay here, sir—face it out. Are you afraid to hear a woman loves another?

ABEL. But, since I love her, how can I stay and calmly hear it from her very lips.

FARMER W. This is not like you, Abel. I have always esteemed you a man of character and determination, and not a silly boy, to dread a disappointment in love. Besides, I want you here to bear me in the facts.

ABEL (*sitting down, looking into fire*). Well, call her, then.

FARMER W. (*opening door, left.*) Priscilla! Niece Priscilla! Come here, my child.

[*Enter PRISCILLA, left.*]

PRISCILLA. Yes, Uncle?

FARMER W. (*closing door.*) Sit down a moment, dear.

PRIS. (*nervously.*) What is it, Uncle John?

FARMER W. Priscilla, Abel tells me, he saw you this noon with a gentleman—an officer——

PRIS. (*quickly interrupting.*) Did Abel tell you that? It was a friend of mine.

FARMER W. Who was this friend? Remember, you are in my charge during your visit here, and must consider me in your father's stead, telling me everything, my dear, as you would him.

PRIS. It was a friend of father's, too—a gentleman from Boston.

FARMER W. An officer of the regulars, was it not, Priscilla?

PRIS. Yes, he is an officer. I met him at home. But why are you so serious, Uncle? And Abel sits there, without a word. Surely, it is not a crime for me to meet a friend upon the road, and stop to speak with him!

FARMER W. No, dear—no crime; we do but ask.

PRIS. And Abel, too, must up and fire at him, as if he were a thief.

ABEL. My orders bade me so; he is an enemy.

PRIS. An enemy! And he without an arm of any kind, except his sword.

ABEL. He had a musket on his horse.

FARMER W. My dear, orders must be obeyed. Abel did rightly, and as I should have done, had I been there.

PRIS. Then you are both cruel, bloodthirsty men, and bring the war upon yourselves.

FARMER W. Hush—hush, Priscilla. You are unreasonable. You do not know what you are talking about, my child. But this young officer—did you meet him by appointment, or did he pass by chance and stop to speak with you?

PRIS. He met me there—(*aside*)—What can I say?

FARMER W. By appointment?

PRIS. (*hesitating.*) Yes, by appointment.

FARMER W. (*with sigh of relief.*) Ah! I am glad.

ABEL (*starting up*). By appointment—you! Priscilla! You, whom I have always thought the very model of a girl, to meet a man, and an officer, by appointment, all alone out in the woods! And I, who love you so, have never ventured even to press your hand! You love him, then?

PRIS. I did not say so, Abel.

ABEL. But you do—you know you do.

FARMER W. Abel! Be a man. Do not give way in such a boyish fashion. Then he rode out here—this young regular—ten miles for you, and nothing else, Priscilla?

PRIS. Only for that. What should he come for else?

FARMER W. He told you nothing about the army—whether they were coming soon? Come, dear, tell me; it is most important that we should know.

PRIS. No, nothing; he told me nothing.

FARMER W. Child, you have taken a load of anxiety off my mind. Then it is a love-scape after all, and concerns but you and Brother Hope; for I must write him of it, Priscilla, and let him know how quiet Miss Hope has admirers, who risk their necks for her sweet sake. Though I think you were wrong to have an appointment, and should not let my Mary junket around in that fashion, still I am greatly relieved to find that is the worst of it.

ABEL. The worst of it!—the worst of it! What could be worse than this? I had rather the regulars would march this very night. But when they come, there's one provincial here will give his blood to drive them back to the sea, and to their Tory King.

PRIS. Don't, Abel—don't; I am so sorry, Abel.

FARMER W. Abel!

ABEL. I mean it. Never fear; we shall see which is the better man, a hired cut-throat, or a freeman battling for his sod.

FARMER W. Yes, Abel; we'll drive them back and fight them till they yield, for *we* will never. But, my boy, you show bad blood. In time of war, as in time of peace, indeed, the hatred of one man for another is base and most disgraceful to our better nature. All personal feeling must be laid aside. The cause—our cause of freedom—can alone justify the means by which, I fear, we must obtain it.

PRIS. (*aside.*) And I, who am betraying them. But if I tell them now, they'll be prepared, and then a battle.

ABEL. Priscilla, I beg your pardon. Forgive me, cousin. I forgot myself and what was due to you.

PRIS. Don't beg my pardon, Abel.

ABEL (*looking at her for a moment*). I must close the barns.

[*Exit, back.*]

FARMER W. You cannot care for our Abel, then, Priscilla?

PRIS. No, uncle, dear. I know his worth, but I do not, cannot love him as he should be loved.

FARMER W. I am sorry, very sorry, for his sake; but in such matters, shall give Mary her own way, and therefore, cannot blame or seek to persuade you.

[*Enter MRS. WHITLEY, MARY, CONTENT and JOHN, left.*]

CONTENT. By the fire—come sit round. Auntie, you sit here, right in the middle. Auntie is going to tell a story, to weave a tale. I'll get the spinning-wheel.

MRS. W. No, no—you careless child, you will break my yarn.

MARY. Priscilla, dear, has father been scolding you, you look so grave?

PRIS. No, Mary; your father is too good to scold any one.

FARMER W. But she deserves a scolding, naughty girl.

MARY. What has Priscilla done ?

CONTENT. Come, come—you three. Uncle, you sit here by me.

FARMER W. Well, where shall I sit ?

CONTENT. Here—right here. I want to hold your hand when anything horrible comes.

JOHN. Take hold of mine.

CONTENT. No, no—I have no confidence in you, Master John. Now, begin a real story, mind ! about the Indians.

MRS. W. Let me see. I know so many stories about those dreadful Indians.

CONTENT. Something that happened to yourself. Were you not carried off some time ?

MRS. W. (*laughing.*) No, dear. What shall I tell them, John ?

FARMER W. Hum ! Tell them about the pet pig.

MARY. Oh, yes. Content has not heard that.

CONTENT. But that is not about the Indians, unless you call them pigs ; but a pet Indian—ugh !

JOHN. Hush—you will see.

MRS. W. Well, children, when I was quite a little girl, we lived at Deerfield, as you know, close by the Indian frontier. It was long after the great Indian war, and though the Indians were peaceable enough, still, at times, they would come in small bands, even as far as Deerfield, on the war-path, with horrid paint and feathers, and burn and ravage in the night, and be away before the morning broke. Do you remember the Bentons, John, how they were all murdered in their beds one night, all except little Susie ? She we never saw again.

FARMER W. Yes ; it was terrible—the wretches.

CONTENT (*shivering*). Bur——Give me your hand, Uncle. (JOHN *offers his.*) Not yours, sir.

MRS. W. Your mother, Content, and I were little girls then, and our father had given us a little pig, a cunning little runt, of which we had taken the best care, and were very fond of, as you may believe. At last it

had grown so large, that it was no longer a fit pet for little girls, and father had determined it must be killed; but we, of course, were quite heart-broken at the very thought, and made such an outcry, that father, laughing, said the pig should live, but privately resolved to kill it in the night, and in the morning we might cry and have it over with. That very evening there had come to the house some wandering Indians, to whom your grandmother had given supper, as was her custom. Pris, your mother, child, and I had peeped at them, and watched them leave with great joy—Indians were our greatest terror—so when we went to bed and the lights were out, we lay and trembled there, like little silly fools, and could not sleep. Your mother, who was older than I, and braver, began to tell me stories, and recall those we had heard, about the Indians, until every sound became, to our imagination, a ringing war-whoop, and every shadow a hanging scalp. Suddenly, there arose outside a cry, a shriek, such as my ears—

(A mournful cry is heard; all start up; JOHN seizes musket; CONTENT covers her face.)

FARMER W. What was that? We must see.

(Cry is heard again.)

CONTENT. Oh! what is it?

MRS. W. Hush! hush, my dear. It is nothing—an owl, perhaps.

(The cry is heard again, nearer and more mournful.)

JOHN. Pooh! it is nothing. I will go and see what the trouble is.

MARY. No, no. Stop him, father!

[JOHN goes toward door; as he reaches it, it is thrown open, and in rushes SWITCH, in horrid plight, hair in disorder, &c.]

SWITCH. Indians! Indians! Save me Oh, please save me!

FARMER W. Indians! Nonsense—there are no Indians for an hundred miles from here.

SWITCH. There are—there are! I was attacked, I say. They were about to scalp me, when some one came to my rescue, and they fled. Bar up the door—they will be here directly.

FARMER W. But where is your preserver?

[Enter ABEL.

ABEL. Here he is; and the worst I saved him from was a wetting in the pond. The boys had caught him, and were about to duck him for a Tory, as he is. They had dressed themselves with skins and feathers, and I shrewdly suspect, had hidden themselves for the purpose of securing him.

FARMER W. They seem to have succeeded.

SWITCH (*aside*). I'll be revenged for this.

MARY. How cruel of them! They ought to be ashamed—to frighten us so.

JOHN (*who has been laughing till he can hardly stand*). Oh! oh! I would I had been there. What fun! Who were they, Abel?

CONTENT. Stop laughing, you silly goose. See! he had his gun.

ABEL. I do not rightly know who they were; they ran so fast I could not catch them, though I followed far.

CONTENT. And your cry, Auntie—was that a donkey, too?

MRS. W. No, dear, though it had four legs; it was our poor little pig. We had better now all turn to bed. We country folks must rise early, and you city misses should do so, too, and bring some roses to your cheeks. Priscilla looks pale and tired.

PRIS. Yes, I am tired. Come, Content. Good-night all!

FARMER W. Good-night, young ladies. Kiss your old uncle, Content.

[*All say good-night ; exeunt ladies, left. JOHN bars door.*

SWITCH. Mr. Whitley, I feel so shaken and doubtful of myself that I will ask you to keep me for to-night, if you will be so good. My nerves are quite paralyzed by this shock.

FARMER W. Oh, certainly, Switch—stay here ; John will give you a shake-down.

[*Exit, left.*

JOHN. Now that's all safe. I will open the window for the air. How finely you were fooled, Switch ! Come in ; I will look out for you. Good-night, Abel.

SWITCH. Good-night, Mr. Abel. I trust your dreams will be most happy ones. Perhaps you may dream of a certain young lady, eh, Mr. Abel ?

ABEL (*impatiently*). Good-night ! Get out.

[*Exit JOHN and SWITCH, right.*

A very weak shoot that Switch.

(*Sits looking into fire. As he sits, moon rises.*)

Then she loves another, and all my love, my almost deference, has been wasted—thrown away—for the sake of a smart coat and martial air. I would I had hit him—the English hound—but I will have my turn yet, when we come to blows. I will pick him out in the first fight we have, and we shall see this time whether I miss or not. But no. Father is right, and she is right ; I will not nourish my resentment with my ill-luck in woman's love ; they cannot, as she says, love as they should, and who would have such love as that ! What is a woman worth, after all ? No, I will forget her—and yet—no, no. Hereafter I will have my country for my sweet-heart, and as a man would give his life for her, so will I give my life, if need be, for my country's good, liberty

and happiness. (*Sits for a while.*) Pooh—pooh! What thoughts! I'll go to bed. What a moon! Cold, cold, as her love for me.

[*Exit, right.*]

(*Moon shines brightly across the floor. Slow music.*)

[*Enter PRISCILLA, left.*]

PRIS. I cannot go to sleep. To think that I should be here—an American girl, who should have freedom in my very blood—and know that the regulars are marching—now—up the road—and yet I stand and do not speak, and bid them rise to arms! Oh, it is shameful. But no—it's better so. Did I arouse them now, they would be prepared, and then who knows? He might be killed, or Abel, or John—perhaps them all. And if I keep his secret, the regulars will come and take the arms and stores, and stop all trouble for a time, at least. (*Walks up and down.*) Why did he tell me? It were better not know. Hark! What's that? Nothing—the wind. Ha-ha! I thought I heard them coming. Perhaps they will not come. But no—he said they would. No, I cannot bear it. I cannot keep the secret. I'll go. (*Rushes to the door—just then noise of hoofs is heard.*) What is that—a horse? (*Rushes to window.*) A man on horse-back. How he comes!

(*Hoof beats come nearer and stop.*)

VOICE (*outside window*). Up—up! To arms! The regulars—the regulars are coming! Up—up!

(*Noise of hoofs disappearing.*)

PRIS. Thank God, I kept his secret.

[*Enter ABEL, right.*]

ABEL. What, Priscilla, you here!

PRIS. They are coming, Abel. He told me so, to-day.

ABEL. He told you—this officer?

PRIS. Yes, Abel—Lieut. Melville. Did you not hear?

ABEL. Yes, I heard the alarm. Father! John! Up—up! Hurrah! The regulars are coming!

[Enter FARMER W., left; JOHN, right, half dressed, putting on coats.]

JOHN. Hurrah! (*Seizes musket*).

FARMER W. The regulars! We must to Lexington, boys; we'll give them a warm reception, and show them what Yankee blood is made of. King George, take your last look upon your Colonies to-night. They are yours no longer; we are free men from this day forth.

JOHN. Hurrah! But you must not go with us, father. You must stay here. What shall we do if anything should happen to you? You are too old. The youngsters are enough to whip these regulars.

PRIS. No, Uncle, you must not go. Stay here.

FARMER W. Stay here? What nonsense! Stay here, when that moment for which I have been waiting half my life has now, at length, arrived? No, no. You do not know your old father, boys, to even hint at such a thing. (*Goes to dresser for musket.*) Old Bess has served me well before to-day, and she shall speak again, or I have forgotten how to prompt her to her work. Did you clean the old gun, John, as I bade you?

JOHN. All clean, father.

FARMER W. Come, now, the powder-horn. (*Puts it on.*)

[Enter MRS. W., MARY and CONTENT, left.]

MARY. Father, you are not going with them! Stop him. Tell him not to go, mother.

CONTENT. No, Uncle John—don't go.

MRS. W. Your father knows best, children; he has had experience, and will restrain the younger blood. John, may God be with you, and with you, my boys. Don't flinch, but meet these soldiers with a firm unyielding front, as true Americans. Don't wait; they will be soon here, and—I—I—cannot bear it.

ABEL. Good-bye, mother.

JOHN. Good-bye. Good-bye, Content, darling.

CONTENT. Good-bye, John. I would I were a man.

JOHN. But I do not, Content.

CONTENT. You horrid boy.

(During latter part of this scene, moon has set, giving place to the dawn, now just breaking. Knocks are heard. JOHN opens door. Enter three Minute-men.)

1st M. M. Come, Mr. Whitley, Abel, John! Are you going to the Green?

JOHN. We are going, never fear. Good-bye, all.

[Exit JOHN, with Minute-men.]

FARMER W. Mary, when we are gone, bar up the door and windows, and get you all up-stairs below the wainscoting, should you hear any shots, and stay there. Now mind me all, you remember we arranged it, wife.

MRS. W. Yes, John. Good-bye.

OMNES. Good-bye.

ABEL. Come, father, come. *(Going.)*

FARMER W. *(Going.)* My children! May God bring us all safely through this day.

[Exeunt FARMER W. and ABEL.]

MRS. W. Now, children, we must close up everything. Come, Priscilla, you and I will go up-stairs, Content and Mary will shut up here.

[Exeunt MRS. W. and PRISCILLA, left.]

(CONTENT and MARY begin to bar door and close shutters;
enter SWITCH, right.)

SWITCH. Let me assist you, ladies.

MARY. What ! you here ?

CONTENT. Why, you despicable man. Did you stay behind ?

SWITCH. It was but to protect you that I stayed. I cannot fire a musket, else would I rush to the rescue of our homes. I will be of more use here ; indeed I will, ladies.

CONTENT. To protect us ! If you cannot fire a musket, how can you protect us ? We can take care of ourselves, thank you, Mr. Switch. But, since you are here, we must take care of you also, I suppose. Take hold and shut these up. Mary, we will watch him. (*Sits down.*) I am not for work when there is a man around. Now, go to work, sir.

SWITCH (*Crawling cautiously to window.*) Is there any one without ?

CONTENT. Oh, you wretched, wretched coward. No, there is no one without.

SWITCH. I was afraid——

CONTENT. Don't tell us ; we know you are afraid.

(*SWITCH goes to work trembling, drops bar, &c.*)

MARY. Come, Content, we must help him ; he can never do it.

CONTENT. Yes, I suppose we must, though for my part, I like to see him shake.

(*They assist him.*)

SWITCH. Thank you, Miss Mary, sweet Miss Mary. I have the sonnet written here.

MARY. The sonnet ! what sonnet ? I want no sonnet now.

CONTENT (*laughing*). He means the sonnet, yesterday. Don't you remember, Mary ?

MARY. How can you laugh, Content? And as for you, Ben Switch, I want no sonnet now, nor never, from you. I despise you, sir, for your cowardice and want of patriotism.

CONTENT. For his everything, why don't you say.

SWITCH. But Miss Mary, I will go; I will take a musket now. Have mercy. I love you so.

CONTENT. Oh, mercy! I must go. A love-scene now.

MARY. Mr. Switch, you insult me, sir. I have a mind to turn you out the door.

SWITCH (*trembling*). No, Miss Mary—no, I beseech you; I will not give you any trouble; let me stay. I have not yet recovered from the shock of my attack last night. Let me stay, Miss Mary.

CONTENT. Let him stay, Mary.

MARY. Well, you may stay, but keep you here below. Come, Content, we must help the others, dear.

[*Exeunt MARY and CONTENT.*]

SWITCH. Why did I not go to Boston? They will be here directly, the red-coats. No; I am glad I stayed. Ah! so you despise me, Miss Mary—me, the scholar and poet. But my turn shall come; I will have my revenge for all these insults. I will betray them, if I can do so without danger to myself. They have stores in the barns, I know. My turn shall come. But—oh, the awful peril of this moment! Perhaps they will kill me immediately—(*knocks*)—what is that? (*Knocks.*)

(*Trying to conceal himself.*)

Here they are! I am a dead man.

VOICE. Open! open!—it is I—it is Parson Brown.

SWITCH. Parson Brown!

(*Seizing musket, he opens door.*)

[*Enter PARSON B.*]

Good morning! good morning, Parson Brown; we are barred up, you see. I am here for the protection of the women-folks.

PARSON B. To protect them—you—where are the others?

SWITCH. Mr. Whitley and the boys have gone up to Lexington Green, to meet these miserable mercenaries.

PARSON B. Yes, yes—I know; but the others, the women—where are they?

SWITCH. Them I have up-stairs, and carefully concealed, lest they come to any harm. Do you think there will be a battle, Parson Brown?

PARSON B. I do not know. I hope not—trust not, but am sorely afraid there may be trouble. Both sides are determined. The regulars do but obey commands, and our men will not, I fear, permit them to carry out their object without resistance, and that means bloodshed.

SWITCH. Are they near?

[Enter MRS. W., MARY and CONTENT.]

MRS. W. Parson Brown! How glad I am to see you. Will there be trouble?

SWITCH. Why—why did you leave your shelter?

MRS. W. Our shelter, sir? We have been in no shelter.

PARSON B. Why, you told me, Switch—

SWITCH (*interrupting*). I must bar the door.

PARSON B. No, stop! Mrs. Whitley, the British troops will be here directly, and are now but a mile distant. I do not look for any battle, and sincerely pray that they may return without any hostilities. I would, therefore, counsel you not to keep your doors and windows barred, which will but breed suspicion in their minds; but to throw everything open for their inspection, and trust yourselves to an all-seeing Providence for protection, believing that our Heavenly Father will turn the minds of these men from all outrage to the innocent.

MRS. W. But the stores! You know we have some of the stores in the barn, entrusted to our care by the Committee.

PARSON B. I know it—I know it.

MRS. W. They are hidden under the hay.

SWITCH (*aside*). Here is my chance. Now, Miss Mary and the rest of them shall pay me well.

PARSON B. We must trust to their not coming upon them.

MRS. W. But if they question us.

PARSON B. In that case, I think—I believe it will not be wrong to answer no, and deny all knowledge of their possession.

MRS. W. And tell a deliberate falsehood?

PARSON B. No; but I fear we must prevaricate. We will be forgiven, for the cause is just.

CONTENT. Down with the bars, Mary.

MARY. No; let Mr. Switch.

SWITCH. But then we shall be entirely unprotected from the missiles of the enemy.

PARSON B. It is better so; take them down, Mr. Switch; we can restore them should there be need.

[*Enter PRISCILLA.*

PRIS. They are here! The Regulars are here!

(*All start expectant. Knocks are heard.*)

VOICE. Open! open in the King's name.

PARSON B. I will open the door. Do not be frightened; they will be gone directly.

[PARSON B. *opens door—enter* MAJOR PITCAIRN, COL. SMITH, LIEUT. MELVILLE, *Sergeant and Soldiers.*

COL. SMITH. Ladies, we are sorry to disturb you. Sergeant, take these men.

(*Sergeant and Soldiers seize SWITCH and PARSON B.*)

Now, you, sir—are you the master of the house?

SWITCH. No, sir—no; I am nobody; I mean no harm. I am a school-master—a poor, harmless pedagogue—and a Tory—yes, I am a Tory.

LIEUT. M. A Tory!—he a Tory! What a Tory!

COL. SMITH. What are you doing here, if you do not own the house—do you live here?

SWITCH. No, sir; no—only visiting, sir. Spare my life, gentlemen; spare my life. I am a poor harmless person.

COL. SMITH. Let him go! Ladies, I wish to make a disagreeable duty as pleasant as possible. Have you any arms or stores?

MRS. W. We have this musket, sir.

COL. SMITH. Is that all? Sergeant, take this musket.

PARSON B. There are no stores *here*, I assure you, sir.

COL. SMITH. Who are you? The master of the house?

PARSON B. No, sir; I am the pastor of the village—an Unitarian clergyman.

MAJOR P. Colonel, they have the whole damned brood of Puritans here, it seems. Preacher and school-master. Pah!

LIEUT. M. There are ladies present, Major.

MAJOR P. What's that to you, sir?

LIEUT. M. Beg pardon (*touches hat*).

COL. SMITH. Release the Puritan, Sergeant.

MAJOR P. Got out of bed at this hour in the morning to chase a parcel of skulking Rebels, whom we never see, and hunt for stores we never find! Where are the rabble?

CONTENT. You will see them soon enough.

PRIS. Content, be quiet!

MAJOR P. Hullo! Who said that? You—you little Rebel—did you say that? They are forward misses, these provincial girls. Why, Melville, you seem to know these people.

LIEUT. M. Yes; I have met these young ladies in Boston.

MAJOR P. Oh, ho! Well, madame, where is the master of this house?

MRS. W. My husband is up at Lexington, with his two sons.

CONTENT. Where you will see them, and they will speak for themselves, I'll warrant.

MAJOR P. Again, Miss Impertinence!

COL. S. Then you are the mistress, and can, perhaps, give us a little wherewith to break our fast. I will not search, since you give me your words that you have no stores or arms.

SWITCH. Allow me a few words, Colonel. (*Whispers*)—There are stores in the barns.

COL. S. What! Madame, you have been deceiving me. I have no orders to punish any one out here, except for resistance to the execution of our commands; but had I authority, I should consider this concealment worthy of attention. And as for you, sir, for a clergyman, methinks you set a poor example to your flock.

CONTENT (*to SWITCH*). You wretch!

COL. S. Lieut. Melville, take a file of soldiers and follow this good fellow. He will direct you.

LIEUT. M. (*to SWITCH*.) Come along. (*Aside*)—What a traitor! He deserves to be hung.

[*Exeunt MEL., SWITCH, Sergeant and Soldiers.*]

COL. S. Now, young ladies, we must trouble you to set us out the best you have, and quickly, too.

(*No one moves.*)

MAJOR P. What is this? Rebellion again? Even the women are a headstrong lot. Come, go to work now. Do you hear? Is this your famous American hospitality?

CONTENT (*aside*). I will not budge.

MARY (*aside*). Nor I.

MAJOR P. Must we force you? (*Approaches CONTENT.*)

PARSON B. Stand back, sir.

COL. S. No violence, Major. We will help ourselves.

MAJOR P. You always were a soft-hearted man, Colonel. Where is the breakfast? (*Looks round.*)

PARSON B. Mrs. Whitley, we had better provide them what we have; they will be the sooner gone. Remember the war has not as yet begun.

MRS. W. Come, children, if we must wait upon the oppressors of our country.

MAJOR P. Oh, you have come to your senses at last, have you! A damned, obstinate, pig-headed lot, these colonists. Were I King George, I would hang a few of them, to teach the rest better manners.

(*The officers consult aside, while MRS. W. and the girls lay the table.*)

CONTENT. I would they might choke themselves—the wretches.

PRIS. Hush, Content; they may hear you.

MARY. Hurry, girls.

CONTENT. Where are the plates, Mary?

MARY. Here.

(*Women busy themselves with breakfast.*)

COL. S. In my opinion, the best plan will be to fire, should they stand, or give us any excuse. The lesson will have the better effect for a little blood to wash it down with.

MAJOR P. Exactly my opinion. Quick and sharp has always been my motto in these little difficulties.

MRS. W. Sirs, your breakfast is prepared.

MAJOR P. Sit down, Colonel. Bacon, bread and cold potatoes! Pah! Bit of bacon, Colonel?

COL. S. Thanks. A poor breakfast, surely. However, we'll have a hot one in Lexington.

CONTENT. Yes, you'll have it hot in Lexington.

COL. S. Eh? What?

MAJOR P. Nothing to drink? Have you no wine or beer?

PARSON B. The habits of our people are simple, sir; we are God-fearing and temperate, and do not tipple your intoxicating poisons to steal away our souls.

MAJOR P. Steal away your souls! You have no souls, Puritan; they are King George's.

MRS. W. We have some cider, sir.

MAJOR P. Bah! Cider? Thank you, Madame. We must do our best with our flasks, Colonel. (*To CONTENT*)—A glass here.

CONTENT. A glass, indeed! Get it for yourself. I am no servant.

COL. S. Major, we will help ourselves. We are the servants to your beauty, young lady. Soldiers are always the slaves of that. Major, these are ladies, remember.

MAJOR P. Ladies! I call them Rebels. Where are those glasses?

(*Gets glasses from cupboard, and fills them from flask.*)

[*Enter MELVILLE.*

LIEUT. MEL. The stores are all destroyed.

COL. S. That is well. Now for Lexington. How far is it from this? You were out here lately, Lieutenant, I believe.

LIEUT. M. About three miles, sir. The troops have all come up, and are ready to advance; they burnt a barn below, with flour in it. The scouts bring in word that the Colonists are all drawn up in line on Lexington Green, seemingly prepared to give us battle.

COL. S. Aha! To give us battle! They shall have their way. Lieutenant, order the battalion to advance, and bid the fifers strike up—what's this their tune?

MAJOR P. Yankee Doodle—ha-ha!

COL. S. Yes, Yankee Doodle. Bid them play it. Forward!

[*Exit LIEUT. MELVILLE.*

MAJOR P. Our brandy first. (*They take glasses.*)

COL. S. Here is confusion to these Rebels, Major.
(*Drinks.*)

MAJOR P. (*putting water in glass.*) I want a spoon.
Get me a spoon, one of you women. (*No one moves.*)

Humph! My finger will do as well. I mean to stir
this damned Yankee blood as I stir this, before to-night.
(*Drinks.*)

COL. S. Forward, Major; we must be off.

(*The band is heard to play "Yankee Doodle."*)

MAJOR P. (*at door.*) A lovely morning, Colonel, for
our work.

[*Exeunt COL. S. and MAJOR P.*]

MARY. Oh, mother! this is dreadful.

MRS. W. My child! My child!

PARSON B. My children, let us pray that our
Heavenly Father will watch over and preserve all those
we hold dear during this hazardous day, and turn the
thoughts and actions of all these His people from bitter-
ness and bloodshed. Hear, O Lord! Hear us.

OMNES. Amen.

CURTAIN.

*Between IIId and IIIId Acts, there is an interval of a
few hours.*

ACT III.

SCENE—*The same. Windows closed with heavy shutters, with loop-holes ; door barred.*

TIME—*Afternoon, 19th April.*

CONTENT and MARY are discovered, CONTENT standing on settee, looking through loop-hole in shutter; MARY seated, hands covering her face.

CONTENT. Now they have all passed, Mary; and I think the cannon have gone too. I have not heard them for some time. Look up, dear; it is all over now, I am sure.

MARY. I can't—I can't. Oh, Content! Is it not terrible? To think that perhaps father or Abel or John may be killed! Just think only yesterday we were all so happy, and everything was so bright and pleasant; and now half the village is burnt, and all is misery! Oh, Content, Content! what dreadful, dreadful creatures men are!—to be so hard and cruel to each other. (*Distant shots are heard.*) Can you see any one now? I still hear some shots.

CONTENT. No; they have all disappeared. The last of them were running, and they were so proud and brave this morning, with belts and epaulets. Oh, look! Here are some men without any coats, stealing along behind the walls and hedges. Why they are firing—they are our men. Mary, look here! Now there are a lot of them.

(*Shots. MARY looks out loop-hole.*)

MARY. That is Eph Wood, with the kerchief round his head, and Mr. Hosmer. Where can father and the boys be?

[*Enter MRS. W. and PRISCILLA, left.*]

MRS. W. Content and Mary, get down immediately. You will be hit by some chance shot. Jump down. (*MARY jumps down.*)

CONTENT. There is no firing this way now; it is all over. Let me look out, auntie; I can't be quiet else.

PRIS. Content, how can you expose yourself so?

CONTENT. There is no danger now.

MRS. W. My children, we have had a wonderful escape. We are so near the road, I thought we certainly should be burnt up with our home; but when these murderous men marched up, they did not stop, but pushed ahead for Lexington, not thinking of resistance, and coming back——

CONTENT. They had not time to stop. I suspect they were in a hurry for their dinners, since they had cold breakfasts.

MRS. W. God grant John and my poor boys have escaped as providentially; it rests with Him alone.

PRIS. I hope—I think they have, Auntie.

MRS. W. We shall know very soon now. The British are evidently retreating, and will go back to Boston. They should be quickly here, if they are alive.

CONTENT. Here they are! Here comes John. I am so glad he is not hurt.

MRS. W. Thank God! One of them, at least, is safe.

PRIS. Open the door—let us open the door.

(MARY and PRISCILLA unbar door.)

CONTENT. And Abel, too, and some one with them. His arm is hurt; they are holding him up on a horse. Who can it be? (*Jumps down from settee.*)

MRS. W. Oh, Mary! Can it be your father?

[*Enter ABEL and JOHN, with MELVILLE, left arm in sling.*]

PRIS. Harry Melville!—a prisoner.

MRS. W. Abel—my boy—and John, both safe; and your father—where is he—where is he, Abel?

ABEL. All safe, mother. Father stayed at Concord, where all is excitement and confusion. He will be here presently, as soon as affairs are quieter there.

CONTENT. And you beat them, did you not, Abel?
How brave of you!

ABEL. Yes—I think we had the better of it.

PRIS. (*aside.*) Are you prisoner, Harry?

MEL. Yes, Priscilla; I am your cousin's prisoner.
He took me fairly, but not until my arm was hurt.

PRIS. You are wounded. Oh, Harry, does it hurt
you very much?

MEL. No, not much—a little; a flesh wound.

ABEL. Sit down here, Lieutenant.

MEL. Thank you, Mr. Whitley. (*Sits down feebly.*)

PRIS. Shall I bathe it—may I bathe it, Abel?

ABEL. Yes, cousin, if you wish; it will do it good.

(PRISCILLA gets water; ABEL watches them.)

(*Aside.*) How she loves him!

CONTENT. So, Master John, you have come back.

JOHN. Yes, Content; are you glad?

CONTENT. Hum—I don't know. You might have
contrived to die for your country; it would have been
so noble, you know; and then I could have loved you
for your bravery, and never married, or something like
that. Now you have come back in a most prosaic man-
ner. Why, you are not even wounded.

JOHN. I have a chance to be killed yet. We must
be off immediately. Mary, dear, get me a bit of bread
and bacon.

CONTENT. Be off immediately! What do you
mean? The British have all gone; the battle is over.

MARY (*brings food*). Yes, John; what do you mean?
Surely it is not necessary to fight again.

MRS. W. John—John, do not deceive us.

JOHN. We must drive them back into town, to
teach them not to come again. I am in earnest.

ABEL. John is right; we have but a few moments
to stay.

MRS. W. Surely you are not going out again, Abel ? You must not go. I have borne bravely all the trials of this day, and cannot bear any more anxiety, Abel. Remember, my son, I am old, and not as strong as I used to be. There are enough without you, Abel. You are so tired, too. Don't go, Abel. Say you will not go, my boy ; it will kill me.

ABEL. Mother, we must go ; we must see the English back to their hole, and deepen the effect of the lesson we have now but begun to teach them. We must go. We shall be back in a few hours, at the most.

MRS. W. But the prisoner—what will you do with him ? You must stay to guard him. See, you cannot go.

ABEL. I have thought of that, and shall leave John here. We must spare him ; I see no help for it.

JOHN. Leave me here among the women to guard a prisoner ! No, no—I go at any hazard ; you may stay, as you like, but I am going.

ABEL. You must be left, I am afraid, John ; he will escape ; it is important we should hold him.

MEL. (*aside.*) Very interesting moment for me, this.

JOHN (*impatiently*). Important or not, I go, and we are now losing precious time. You may be spared as well as I, if one must stay.

CONTENT. Stay, John ; it is not so bad to be among the women, sir. We will wait upon you, and you shall have a splendid hot supper.

JOHN (*contemptuously*). Hot supper.

CONTENT. I will be very kind, John ; I will give you a kiss—there now. You will stay, won't you, Johnny ?

JOHN. No, no, Content—would you have me a coward ? Even you cannot tempt me.

ABEL. What shall I do ? I cannot remain myself. Will you give your word, sir, not to escape ?

MEL. I cannot do that, Mr. Whitley; I am bound to do my very best to escape from your custody, or at least to keep back one of you to guard me; it is my duty to do so. Did you know better the rules of war, you would see that. I am very sorry, but I cannot give my parole.

PRIS. Oh, Harry, give your word.

ABEL (*aside*). Harry!

MEL. No, Priscilla; I am only slightly wounded; my duty to my King forbids me to promise, while there remains a chance of my being of any service. I will not give my word.

ABEL. I will not press you, then, Lieutenant; but what can I do, though? If Parson Brown were only here, but he is at Concord.

MARY. Leave him, and you go, if you must, Abel; we will guard him. I can fire a musket with the best of you. Lock him in the store-closet here, and I'll warrant he shall not escape.

MEL. (*aside*.) What a blood-thirsty young woman!

JOHN. Yes, yes—that is it; Mary shall guard him! A Yankee girl shall hold a British officer—ha-ha! In here, if you please, Lieutenant—ha-ha!

MEL. Very well, sir. Bu—— what a dark hole!

PRIS. But his arm—his wounded arm; he will die.

JOHN. He will not give his word; we must do the best we can.

ABEL. It needs must be so.

JOHN. You can sit on the flour-barrel, Lieutenant.

MEL. So I can! (*Aside*)—What a disgrace! (*Shrugging his shoulders*.) Fortune of war.

JOHN (*shutting him in closet and bolting door*). His arm must cure itself for the moment. Come, Abel, we must be off; we are left behind already in the chase.

ABEL. Good-bye, mother; we will return all safely, never fear.

OMNES. Good-bye!

ABEL (*aside*). Be careful of Priscilla, Mary! She loves this Lieutenant, and, I fear, would help him to escape.

MARY. Trust me, Abel—(*takes musket, and posts herself before closet door*).

JOHN. But you have my musket. What can I do without that?

ABEL. You can pick one up; there are plenty lying on the road. There is no danger now, mother; you may leave all open. Father will be back from Concord directly, and we shall be home in a few hours, if all goes well, and I am sure all will go well. The Regulars are thoroughly demoralized; we shall have but a running fight to Boston, with little danger to the pursuers; so farewell all for a short space.

[*Exeunt JOHN and ABEL.*]

MRS. W. This last farewell and new anxiety is too much for me; I am afraid I cannot bear it.

CONTENT. You are tired, Auntie; come up-stairs and lie down. Remember how well they have fought! Nothing can happen to them now.

PRIS. Yes, come up-stairs, Auntie.

MRS. W. And leave Mary here alone?

MARY. I shall be perfectly safe, mother. Content will come back and guard with me. Priscilla, you stay with mother, dear.

[*CONTENT and PRISCILLA lead MRS. W. out, left.*]

MARY. Poor mother! What a painful day it has been for her; and Priscilla, too—how much she must have suffered, poor girl! So she loves this young officer! How quiet she has been about it! I think he is rather good-looking, and a proper sort of a man; but then, a regular and officer, too, perhaps he ordered the soldiers to fire at Abel and John and our friends. He shall not escape. I wonder if this musket is loaded—

(*tries it with ramrod.*) Yes, it is ; and the priming, how is that ? No, not enough powder ; I am glad I saw it. There should be some powder here, (*goes to cupboard*)—yes, here is a horn, (*primes gun*). Now, Mr. Regular, if you escape, it will not be my fault.

VOICE (*smothered*). Miss Mary ! Miss Mary !

MARY. Who is that ? Oh, the prisoner ! (*At closed door*)—What do you want ?

VOICE. A glass of water, please ; I am burning with thirst.

MARY. Burning with thirst ! He is a fellow-creature. (*Places gun against table, and fills glass with water—coming back*)—How careless of me ! It may be a trick. How shall I give it him ?

VOICE. Please, Miss Mary, I am very faint.

MARY. Poor fellow ! (*Speaking at door*)—Will you promise not to try to escape until you are locked up again ?

VOICE. Yes, yes—quick.

MARY (*opens door*). Come out, then.

(*MELVILLE staggers out.*)

MEL. I have lost so much blood.

MARY. Poor fellow ! Sit down here.

(*Gives him glass of water, which he drinks eagerly*).

MEL. Thank you ! thank you ! How warm I am !

MARY (*feeling pulse*). You are feverish.

MEL. Yes, I know it. What a nice, cool little hand ! (*Aside*)—And what a devilish pretty girl ! (*Takes her hand.*) What a plucky little woman you are, Miss Mary !

MARY. Am I ? Thank you. But I do not like compliments from Regulars. Let go of my hand, sir.

MEL. Just feel how hot my head is.

MARY. It is hot ; I will open the window. (*Unbars shutters and opens window. The sun is just setting.*)

MEL. (*Taking gun and pointing it at her.*) How easily I could escape now.

MARY. Oh, no—you couldn't.

MEL. Why not?

MARY. Because you have given me your promise. If you ever broke your word, you would have given it before to Abel.

MEL. Yes, that is true; you are quite a logician. (*Puts down gun.*) How delicious this breeze is! You are an angel, Miss Mary, to treat an enemy in this kind manner!

MARY. An angel and a logician! What a contrast!

MEL. But you are an angel.

MARY. Am I really? Yes (*taking gun*); an angel with a musket instead of a harp! Come, sir—you promised to go back!

MEL. Did I promise to go back?

MARY. Certainly you did.

MEL. Oh, no, I did not; I am quite sure I only promised not to try to escape until I was locked up again.

MARY. But you must go back.

MEL. Why must I?

MARY. Because I shall make you. You may stay a minute by the clock, and then I shall be obliged to compel you to return to your closet, Mr. Regular.

MEL. A minute! What a happy minute! What shall I do with it? Let me kiss your hand for a minute, Miss Mary!

MARY. Sir! Is this your return for my kindness in allowing you a moment of liberty? Kiss my hand, you—a slave of a king! You are not worthy to kiss my shoe! I am a free American girl, sir.

MEL. Ha-ha! They are a funny lot, these Colonists! Well, what shall I do with my minute?

MARY. Take a few breaths of fresh air; you will not have any more for some time to come, I'll warrant.

MEL. Yes—that is a good idea; how nice it is! That closet is very close.

MARY. It is not so small—a good six feet by ten. In with you—the minute is long past.

MEL. (*rising.*) Well, if I must, I must; you are a hard-hearted little Rebel, Miss Mary. (*Aside.*) I would I could see Priscilla for a minute; I would use it better than this.

[MEL. enters closet; MARY bolts door.

MARY. He would be a very nice man, were he not a horrid Englishman. Why do they not stay at home, and not come here to trouble us? Kiss my hand, indeed! and he a Regular—ugh! Where can Content be?

[Enter PRISCILLA, left.

PRIS. Mary, your mother is very sick; you must go to her immediately.

MARY. Very sick! I will go to her—no, I cannot—the prisoner—who will guard him? Oh, what shall I do?

PRIS. I will watch him; give me the gun. Run—quick.

MARY (*hesitating*). Is mother very sick? Does she really need me, Priscilla?

PRIS. Yes, dear—quick; give me the gun; she wants some medicine I could not find; she says you know where it is.

MARY (*looks at her for a moment; she looks down*). I see—I see it all; you are not telling me the truth, Priscilla; mother does not wish to see me. Why did you not send Content? No, I will not give the prisoner to your charge. You love him, and allow that love to conquer all your honor, love for us—all else beside. Are you not ashamed, you wicked girl? You were about to give him his liberty, to betray us, for the sake of a soldier who has been shooting your friends and countrymen through this mournful day, and will do so the more should he escape.

PRIS. No, Mary, no—you are wrong; your mother is really ill. Call to Content, and ask her, Mary. I would not do as you have said. I love him, to be sure; but when I measure that love by my duty, I am strong and right. Trust me, darling! I would have sent Content, but she was holding your mother, and could not be disturbed. Won't you believe me? Give me the gun. Go quickly.

MARY. I will trust you, Priscilla. Forgive me for the suspicion. Promise me, Priscilla, you will not even open the door.

PRIS. I promise you, Mary.

MARY. Here is the gun.

[*Exit, left.*]

PRIS. And now I cannot release him! I had resolved to do so, should I have the chance; but I will not do it. And yet I love him so! To hold him there, a prisoner! No matter—I will not betray her trust in me. How quiet he is! (*Listens at door.*) No sound. Perhaps he is dead! Shall I open the door? No, I will not do it. (*Softly*)—Harry! No answer. (*Louder*)—Harry!

VOICE. Yes, Priscilla; open the door.

PRIS. No, Harry; I may not. Are you well, darling?

VOICE. Almost dying of fever and thirst.

PRIS. Almost dying! What shall I do?

VOICE. Open the door—quick.

PRIS. I cannot, Harry—I must not. You are our prisoner. To think that he should be there wounded, and I who love him so, am tied by miserable duty, and cannot comfort or release him. (*Puts gun down and seats herself by table.*) Why did I promise? Why do I hesitate? I *will* open the door. He will be too weak to escape. (*Rushes to door.*) No. What is my trifling pain to my honor and my country's good? I will be firm. I have already been false to them once. In this

I will atone for it. (*Sits down, the back of chair conceals her from any one coming in door.*)

[*Enter SWITCH, cautiously.*

Switch—here.

SWITCH. No one here! I know the men are all gone. Where can he be? If I can release him, it will be the making of me. (*Sees PRISCILLA.*) Miss Priscilla! Excuse me. I thought I would come to see if you were all safe.

PRIS. You are a traitor, sir! What are you doing here? If you are caught, you will receive your just punishment. You had better get to Boston.

SWITCH. You are very hard upon me, Miss Priscilla. I thought I might be of use to you—to you personally. I noticed you took a certain interest in a handsome young officer, this morning, Miss Priscilla.

PRIS. Sir! What is that to you?

SWITCH. Nothing—nothing. I only thought that, seeing you with a musket there, you might be, perhaps, performing a duty which was unpleasant to you, all the men being away.

PRIS. I do not understand—

SWITCH. And that, without your doing anything to assist a certain prisoner to escape, I, a very humble person, who am a friend of his, might help my friend out of a difficulty. I have his horse outside.

PRIS. You—you have his horse outside! Was ever man made like this! A cowardly traitor, if ever I have heard of one.

SWITCH. Do not be so violent, Miss Hope. You are at my mercy, if I choose to use force; but force is not my way of accomplishing my purposes. (*Aside*)—Where can he be? I must find out.

PRIS. At your mercy! A miserable scribbler! At your mercy! You do not dare to touch me, sir.

SWITCH. Don't—don't, Miss Priscilla ; I am your friend.

PRIS. My friend ! You insult the name of friend.

SWITCH. I brought you the letter yesterday morning. You knew they were about to march, and did not mention it. (*Aside*)—A happy guess.

PRIS. How do you know it ?

SWITCH. No matter ; I know it. Ha-ha ! You kept his secret well. You see, Miss Priscilla, there is a bond between us. Where is he ?

PRIS. Go way, you miserable man ; there is no bond between us ; if I have not done my duty well, I shall do it now. Go way. You will be caught, and then it will be hard with you.

SWITCH. Come, girl—no nonsense now. Where is he ? You are right. I must not linger talking with you. (*Approaches her menacingly.*)

PRIS. If you dare to touch me.

SWITCH (*struggling with her*). Give me the gun. Where is he hid, you vixen ?

PRIS. Help—Abel ! Harry ! Help—Mary !

(*As they struggle, the door is burst open, bolt flying across room.*)

MEL. What is this ? Away you scoundrel !

SWITCH. I was about to free you, Lieutenant. I have your horse without.

MEL. To free me ? My horse—is he without ? I must be off, Priscilla. I will see you in Boston, darling.

PRIS. Stop, sir ! Do not move, or I will shoot you.

MEL. You, Priscilla ! You will shoot me—I who love you so, whom you have often said you love better than life itself ! Well, shoot me, then.

PRIS. I have promised, Melville, that you shall not escape, if I can prevent it.

MEL. Shoot me. Why don't you shoot me, then? I have nothing left to live for now.

SWITCH. Don't mind her, Lieutenant. Come—your horse is here; we must get away before the men come back. She will not fire—come.

MEL. You black-hearted villain! I do not owe my escape to you. Clear out, and never let me look upon your face again, or it will be the worse for you. Go!

SWITCH (*sneaking out*). He will get over that. I brought the horse, and will wait by it until he has persuaded her.—Lovers! I know them. If he does not eat his words, I'll ride off before his eyes.

[*Exit.*]

MEL. Why don't you shoot me, Priscilla?

PRIS. I have no reason, if you do not try to escape. (*Lowers gun.*)

MEL. Priscilla! Priscilla! Is this your love for me? Now the first time it comes for trial, you turn upon me and keep me here a prisoner in disgrace!

PRIS. I love you, Harry—yes; but I love my country more. How can I allow you to escape, and then live on, a faithless girl? You do not love me to ask for such a sacrifice.

MEL. But you are English as much as I, Priscilla. The Colonies will never be free; and if they should, I will make you an English wife. You will be my little wife, and live in England, dear.

PRIS. No, no—never. I will not marry you to live in England, away from all my friends, with a man—an enemy. After this day, there can be nothing between us.

MEL. (*approaching her.*) Priscilla, darling! Do you wish to break my heart? Come, dear, put down that musket, which is not a fit companion for my little girl. We will argue about it, dear. You know you like to argue with me. (*He takes musket from her.*)

[*Enter MARY, left.*]

Miss Mary! Farewell, Priscilla, darling! I will see you soon.

[*Escapes.*]

PRIS. Traitor! Traitor! Stop him, Mary—stop him!

MARY. Yes, if I can. (*She seizes musket and fires out of window.*)

PRIS. No, not that way.

MARY. That was the only way. So, cousin, this was your solemn promise—this your faith to me, and love for all of us.

PRIS. Mary, tell me—you did not hit him?

MARY. Hit him? No; I wish I had. How could you do so, Priscilla? How could you tell me such an untruth?

PRIS. Was not your mother ill, Mary—was she not?

MARY. Yes, that was true; but this—this. Why did you open the door?

PRIS. I did not, Mary. I was true; I kept my promise. He burst the door himself. See! here is the bolt, torn from its staple. Look, Mary, look!

MARY. Yes—it was burst from the inside. He was shamming faint, then. Oh, the traitor! And you, Priscilla, do you love him now?

PRIS. Mary, he burst the door to rescue me. I called to him for help.

MARY. To rescue you! Who from?

PRIS. From Switch, who came to help him to escape.

MARY. From Switch! But where is he now?

PRIS. He turned him out. He has gone to Boston.

MARY. To Boston! I saw two when I fired. (*Rushes to window.*) Could it have been him? (*Uttering a scream.*) Oh, Priscilla, see that! (*Covers her face.*)

PRIS. What is it? What is it, Mary?

MARY. Switch! I shot him. I saw him crawling into the bushes beside the road. How dreadful! He is wounded—poor, harmless man.

PRIS. Not harmless, Mary. Remember the stores this morning, and his attack on me but now. His punishment is just.

MARY. Perhaps it is; but I wish I had not done it.

[Enter FARMER W. and PARSON B.]

MARY. Oh, father! father! Thank God, you have returned.

FARMER W. My poor child! The day has been a hard one for you. Where is your mother, dear?

MARY. Here she is.

[Enter MRS. W., assisted by CONTENT.]

MRS. W. At last, you have come, John.

FARMER W. Yes—all safe, you see; and we gave the Regulars a famous drubbing—did we not, Parson Brown?

PARSON B. Yes, Mr. Whitley—we have done our best for our country, and I think from this day we can truly call it our own.

FARMER W. Stand round, girls, and give a round of cheers for the United States. Now—all together! You must join, Priscilla, in spite of your officer lover.

PRIS. Oh, I will give it, with all my heart, Uncle.

[Enter ABEL and JOHN.]

JOHN. Let us in, too.

MRS. W. My boys! No one hurt. This is truly a gift of Providence.

ABEL. Yes—we drove them back to Boston in confusion, and it will be a long time before they risk their skins out here again. But how about the prisoner?

MARY. He burst the door and escaped.

PARSON B. The prisoner! What prisoner?

ABEL. Lieut. Melville, whom I captured.

FARMER W. And he has escaped! Well, so much the better. I don't know what we could have done with him in this old house. But he should have taken some one with him, seems to me.

CONTENT. Who, Uncle?

FARMER W. Why, your sister there.

PRIS. Now, Uncle John, you are too severe.

FARMER W. I half suspect you let him go.

MARY. Indeed, she did not.

JOHN. If he be free, we are all free also. So we must not grudge it him.

FARMER W. So we are. Hurrah!

OMNES. Hurrah!

PARSON B. We are a free people from this day. Let us take care that, as a people, we continue to merit our good fortune; and may the day never come when any tyrant shall again oppress us—whether he call himself king or magistrate of any name.

JOHN. We shall have some more fighting though, I hope.

CONTENT. You have had enough fighting, Master John. You must stay quietly at home hereafter.

JOHN. All right—with you, Content.

PARSON B. Do not let us forget, in the midst of our good fortune, to thank the One above to whom we owe it. (*All bow.*)

Oh, Heavenly Father! We thank Thee for Thy watchful care over all of us during this day. We commit to Thy mercy all those whom Thou hast seen fit to take away from us in the execution of their duty. And we beg of Thee to keep and preserve us and this Thy new people, as long as shall befit Thy inscrutable

benevolence, making them to live Thy perfect life and follow Thy commandments.

OMNES. Amen.

CURTAIN.

END.

LIBRARY
JUL 31 1883

30.

One
card; to be
and juvenile
not to be r
lays, who w
ncluding S
urrower's
his Hall.
Borrow
ar
e

1
7

